

It is not easy to compete with twenty or thirty other attractions in a given evening. Yet this is what Canadians must face every time they perform in London, Paris, New York, Rome, Los Angeles, or a host of other centres around the world.

Given these unusual risks, it is imperative that programming abroad be approached strategically, and that sufficient financial and human resources be provided to properly promote and publicize all programs. This aspect of program presentation is so essential that it should be the first thing to be considered after a program is selected. It would be far better not to present Canadian works abroad at all, or to drastically reduce the actual number of these presentations, than to attempt to present too many works and have them suffer from inadequate publicity and promotion. No news travels faster in the international arena than news of scantily-attended performances and papered houses. Such occurrences have a negative rather than positive impact on our image abroad.

Program Evaluation

In recent years, the Department of External Affairs has instituted a procedure of program evaluation following Canadian presentations abroad. This is a valuable procedure, since it affords an opportunity to assess the reasons for successes and failures, as well as to build up a body of knowledge about the interests and tastes of audiences in different parts of the world. It takes time to develop a facility for program selection and expertise in program presentation and effective evaluative procedures help to provide this by supplying valuable information for future use.

In this evaluation process, as much use as possible should be made of assessments by authorities and critics in the countries where the performances actually take place. Very often, these people have a more objective perspective than Canadians and are able to spot the reasons why a certain program did not work or how a particular program might be improved. In fact, it would probably pay to consult these people on program selections as well, as they are often in a better position to predict audience reactions in their own countries, especially where they are familiar with the works or the performers presenting the works. At any rate, it is obvious that effective program evaluation is an important element in Canada's external cultural policy.

Financial Support

It is becoming ever clearer that financial support for Canada's international cultural relations is inadequate relative to the need to create a strong Canadian presence elsewhere in the world; the need to capitalize on the numerous opportunities which exist for economic, political, social and cultural enrichment; the need to provide many more opportunities for Canada's creative talents; and the need to keep pace with other countries.

As was concluded earlier, it would be unwise for the Department of External Affairs to assume sole financial responsibility for these relations, even if it had the financial resources to do so, since the producing organizations and funding agencies would not assume any responsibilities on their own. Nevertheless, if the Department does not exhibit real leadership in this field, it is unlikely that other institutions and agencies - particularly provincial and municipal